

JERSEY BEAT



DEC/JAN 83 NO. 6

FREE

COYOTE RECORDS



Almaas, Phosphenes debut;

Hoboken keeps popping!

and...

Mopeds



DIRT LP



Hardcore



Psychedelia

New 45's

Thomas Starr
New American Press
 — Verlag & Vertrieb —

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VOL. I NO. 6

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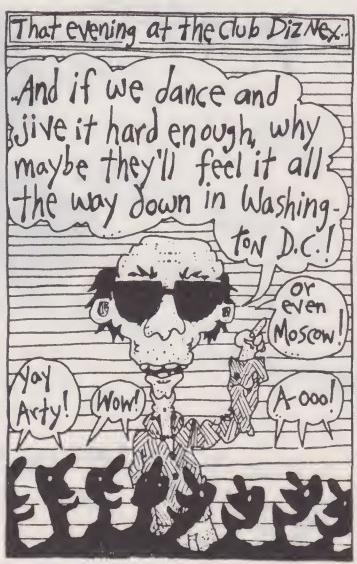
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THANKS

Steve Fallon, Johnny Dirt, Flamin' Groovies, John Narucki, Shoes, all the staff, the Sunday Night Bowling League, and all you fans: A Merry Christmas to all - God Bless Us, Everyone



COYOTE-Hoboken's new label



Steve's got the beat...

"BEAT RODEO," Steve Almaas
Coyote Records
P.O. Box 112 Uptown
Hoboken, NJ 07030

That ubiquitous Bongo, Richard Barone, pops up again, here as producer and instrumentalist on the debut solo effort by Steve Almaas. These four songs were originally cut as demos during the period between Almaas' tenure as the fourth Bongo and the formation of Steve Almaas' Beatnik Rodeo (now called the Beat Rodeo), and they demonstrate why the Bongos could never quite assimilate Almaas' songs into their sets.

Almaas has been a prominent figure in the American New Wave since the mid-70's, when he helped lead Minneapolis' answer to the Ramones, the Suicide Commandos. When the Commandos disbanded, Almaas relocated to New York and formed the Crackers, one of the first of the New Pop bands. Twangy guitar riffs and cheery pop melodies were the Crackers' trademarks, and they carry over to the songs on "Beat Rodeo."

Almaas' songs have always been simpler and more direct than the oblique compositions of Barone, and Almaas has also always been more firmly in touch with his rock roots. These four tunes - pure ebullient pop-craft, every one - exemplify those traits. One can almost hear Eddie Cochran and the Everly Brothers strumming along with "What's The Matter," while "Do You Mean It" is a homage to Buddy Holly's "Peggy Sue." Yet the tunes sound new even as they recall the works that inspired them. This is what pop should be, a recycling and reinventing of yesterday's happiest moments.

- J. Testa

...Phosphenes go 'Meep Meep'

PHOSPHENES, Phosphenes
Coyote Records

With diehard popsters like Richard Barone and James Mastro of the Bongos as producers, the Phosphenes debut e.p. was bound to be something different. And while Barone and Mastro may have seemed odd choices to produce such a noisy, experimentalist combo at first, the results prove that the combination was inspired.

Barone and Mastro have given the Phosphenes a clean, buoyant pop sound, leaving Bob Pezzola's breathtakingly diverse guitarwork unfettered by the murk and gloom of so many "art-rock" records. Pezzola is a 4th Generation rock whiz kid, one who's assimilated every pastmaster from Hendryx to Page to Branca; he effortlessly glides from heavy metal riffing (on "Asexual" and "Cripple," the e.p.'s two up-tempo rockers) to abstract electronic noodling. With Ben Esposito's supple rhythmic bass mixed nice and high, and Stanley Demeski's steady, crisp

Cont. on p.13



Hardcore: Sand In The Face

A Cupla Punks Sittin' Around Talkin'

by Mike Lydon

Sand In The Face are a hardcore thrash band from Montville, New Jersey, a desolate sector of Bergen County best described as Upstate Jersey. The band is Paul (vocals and guitar), Pete (Bass), and Monk (Drums). This interview was conducted with Paul over the phone by Mike Lydon, a teenage Punk from Union City. - Ed.

JERSEY BEAT: How'd you get your name?

PAUL: We all made a list of names and that's the one we picked.

JB: When did the band get started?

P: Last September. But I had another band that broke up, so I started this one. Then our bass player quit and Pete joined and started playing with us.

JB: Are there a lot of bands & clubs in your area?

P: There're a lot of bands but not enuf clubs. We play a lot of parties. We played the Community Center but they'll never have us back 'cos we trashed the place. All these punks from out of town came and it was choas.

JB: When will you be playing NYC or NJ?

P: Maybe in the spring. We still have to practice with our new bass player and we have some new songs. We were going to play the Dirt Club but they found out we were hardcore. The guy there (Johnhy "Dirt" Schroder) doesn't like hardcore bands.

JB: So how's the scene in Montiville?

P: It's good. There are a lot of punks there. I hear another band is starting there soon called Future Confusion. There are a couple of New Wave fags in my school. They like...

JB: The Go Go's?

P: Yeah, they're all into fascist rock, they listen to the Go Go's on WPLJ.

JB: What kind of songs do you like to write?

P: About everything. Parents, school, people in our town. We have some political songs.

JB: How about describing some of your songs?

Cont. on p.13



PAUL

DEAR SANTA,



Last issue, we ran a year-end poll and asked our readers to vote for their favorite records of '82. While the return was hardly overwhelming, enough ballots came back to give a hint of what Jersey's New Wave fans were listening to in 1982. Based on those votes, here's a collection of '82 releases that might be appreciated under the Xmas tree of your favorite punk or punkette. Happy Holidays, everybody. See you next year.

- Jim Testa

DRUMS ALONG THE HUDSON, Bongos (PVC): Hoboken's favorite sons' pure pop. An especially good gift for fans who don't have all the 45's, since they're all collected on the lp.

CHRONIC TOWN, R.E.M. (IRS): Georgia's gift to popdom, this gets my vote as the single best record of 1982. Five cuts, all brilliant.

FIELDS, Individuals (Plexus): Fans should get the lp and also the 45, "Dancing W/My 80 Wives," for the non-lp b-side, "Our World," a great cut.

DIRT COMPILATION ALBUM, VOL. I (Dirt): 10 local bands on vinyl. A good bet for your fave scenemaker.

"Full Arms And An Empty Heart," Whyos (Fake Doom): The best 45 out of Jersey this year, a rockabilly blast. Git it.

"Unemployed EP," Kraut (Cabbage): For your skinhead kid brother, the best of the local Hardcore releases; 3 songs, too.

LATE NEWS,

BYE BYE JONNIE: Jon Klages has left the Individuals; on the record, Jon says he was tired of the rock rat race, although you know how these things go...The Indi's will carry on with Tricia Wygal (sis of drummer Doug and bassist Janet) on keyboards and Gene Holder, the band's producer, on guitar...

BONGO BEAT: Hoboken's Bongos are reportedly very close to a deal with RCA Records for an e.p.; in fact, RCA has made a firm offer and the band is holding out for more moola up front...Sez Bongo Rich Barone: "Don't worry, if it's not RCA it'll be CBS"...Meanwhile, the boys' debut lp, DRUMS ALONG THE HUDSON, proved to be (not unexpectedly) the runaway favorite in our Jersey Beat reader's poll...
A WORD FROM THE COMPETITION: Chris Moffa and the Competition have been on hiatus for a while due to a change in bass players but the band reports they'll be back in the clubs soon (opening for Johnny Thunders in January at CBGB, for starters); the release of an e.p. entitled "Places To Live" is also imminent...

HARDCORE FRONT LINES: Don't forget December is Hardcore Month in Jersey, with the big A.O.D. show in Newark's NIVP Theater Dec. 18th and a WFMU punkathon on Dec. 16th...

HOBOKEN HOTLINE: Steve (Maxwells) Fallon has certainly been busy, launching not only his Coyote Records (along with partner Bill Nelson) but also opening Pier Platters, a record shop at 56 Newark Street (just down the block from the Clam Broth House, 5 mins. from the Hoboken PATH)...Great prices, too...Check it out...

HOT GOSSIP



Richard Tepp (l.) & The Young Lions - '60's Psych-punks, Jersey style

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Richard & the Young Lions

By Ron Rimsite

Jersey Beat focuses on New Jersey's new-music bands, but original Jersey rock 'n roll didn't start in 1980. As DJ John Narucki states elsewhere in this issue, contemporary rock radio (and, we might add, rock journalism) has no sense of history, but rock 'n roll has a great history. This, then, is a bit of Jersey's rock n roll past. - Ed.

One of the best known & loved Jersey bands of the '60's was Richard & The Young Lions, from out of Newark. Richard Tepp, the lead singer (with typical '66 punk snarl) led his 5 teenaged pals on a few singles on the Phillips label. Their most famous song (soon to appear on an as-yet unnamed '60's punk collection) is the classic "Open Your Door."

"Open Your Door" starts with a scorching fuzz guitar, typical of the garage bands of the era, but then untypically goes into orchestrated chimes, African hair drums, and finely-crafted backup vocals! All these frills don't take away from the raw punk intensity of the sound, they just make it more distinctly a classic.

You might still remember Richard & The Young Lions from their many TV appearances. The combo never scored a big national hit and broke up in the late '60's, leaving their 45's behind to be discovered by record collectors and garage-band fanatics today. According to a recent Aquarian story, Tepp is still around, with a new band, giving it another shot. Anyone who knows his whereabouts, tell him about Jersey Beat and let him know we haven't forgotten the great Richard & The Young Lions, and we're hoping to hear from him again!

Ron Rimsite is editor of 99th Floor (see fanzine section for details.)

jersey beat talks to john narucki



When it comes to Jersey radio, WFMU-FM at Upsala College is generally regarded as the best. And the disc jockey most often mentioned as the cream of FMU's crop is John Narucki.

Narucki does more than just spin records. His Saturday night show (8 p.m. to midnight) brings live guests into the studio for interviews and on-the-air concerts. Narucki, a frequent presence on the club scene, also tapes bands on location for broadcast. The following interview was conducted by phone; the quotes have been pieced together for continuity out of a wide-ranging conversation that lasted three-quarters of an hour.

JERSEY BEAT: How much freedom do you have in terms of the bands you present and the records you play on the air?

NARUCKI: 100 per cent. Everybody else in radio just plays music. On a college station, you can do radio. And I'll tell you, college radio will save this music if anybody will. If you listen to commercial stations, it's like an 8-track tape, the same stuff over and over. And you know, 8-tracks just became obsolete.

JERSEY BEAT: Why is radio so conformist? Even a lot of the local college stations play more British music than good local bands like the Bongos.

NARUCKI: Most people in commercial radio are just afraid to stick their necks out. The reason why English bands get on the radio here is, well, there's two reasons. First, they have novelty. If they're from England, you can't just go out on the weekend and see them all the time. And secondly, everybody in the music business is waiting for the Next Big Thing, the new Beatles. They've been waiting ten years. And they all think the New Beatles will be from England. So anything English gets played, because nobody wants to miss out.

JERSEY BEAT: FMU plays anything the deejays like, but some college stations actually have restricted playlists.

NARUCKI: I can't speak for other stations, but at FMU, our playlist works the reverse of most playlists. Most stations tell their deejays what they must play. Our playlist is just a reflection of what we have been playing. We have to tell the record companies that we're playing some of their records. Sometimes, though, when they get our list and see what's been getting heavy airplay, they go nuts, because it's not what they're pushing, it's what we like.

If you listen to commercial New York radio, it's terrible because it all sounds the same. From the New York stations, you'd think there was no such thing as reggae. Rockabilly does not exist. Blues does not exist. And rock and roll was apparently invented in 1967, by the Doors. Rock and roll radio, except when they make a big special out of it, has no sense of history, but rock and roll has a great history. That's another side of what we try to do at FMU. Not just play new stuff, but give a sense of history and context to this music.

Cont. on next pg.

free RADIO JERSEY

WFDU FM 89.1: Broadcasts weekends, weekdays from 1am to 4 pm. Neil Adams plays more hardcore than most. Farleigh-Dickinson Univ.

WFMU FM 91.1 John Narucki on Saturday nights, Pat Duncan on Thursday nights, and the best overall coverage of the Jersey scene on the air. Upsala College.

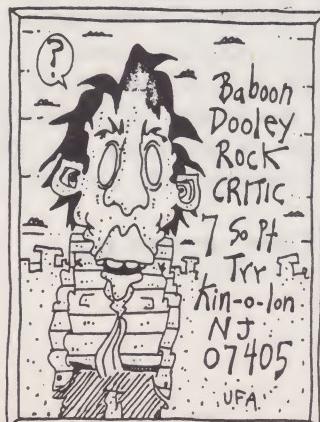
WMSC FM 90.3 Rich Rohnefeld and Alice Genesee are good dj's but I wouldn't know & neither would anyone who doesn't live verrry near their transmitter. Montclair State College.

WRSU FM 88.7 Some New Brunswick scene coverage. Rutgers University-New Brunswick.

WKNJ FM 90.3 Transmitter's in Union. Lots of American new-wave. The Dirt LP made their heavy airplay list last month. Kean College.

WNYU FM 89.1 Shares a frequency with WFDU. Home of the New Afternoon Show if you like Brit dance-wave, and Hal's Life After Death hardcore show.

WPRB FM 93 Lots of mainstream new-wave judging from their playlists. Also some specialized new-music programs throughout the week. Princeton Univ.



NJ FANZINES

ASSASSIN OF YOUTH: PO Box 261, Rochelle Pk. Hardcore from the feminine point of view, thanks to lively, articulate editor Torchya. 50 ¢

CHURCH OF LATTER DAY PUNKS: 611 Lawrence Ave. Westfield, NJ 07090

Mostly hardcore, with poetry, graphics, reviews, cartoons, etc. Good buy. 40¢

GORE GAZETTE: c/o Sullivan, 75 N. Fullerton Ave., Montclair, NJ 07042

Bi-weekly roundup of sleaze, gore, and exploitation flicks in the metro area. Lots of fun for sicko movie buffs. Free w/SASE.

99th FLOOR: 145 Marks Pl. No. Bergen 07047 Fanzine dedicated to psychedelic garage bands. Lots of new stuff about mainly overlooked local heroes Vipers, Chesterfield Kings, Fleshtones, etc. plus collectors tips. Free w/SASE

Always send a self-addressed stamped envelope (SASE) when you write to fanzines.

NARUCKI cont.

JERSEY BEAT: Is the problem that most deejays are just in radio to make a living, that they're not really rock and roll fans?

NARUCKI: Forget deejays. At the risk of offending everybody I know in this business, disc jockeys are as insignificant as bacteria. The real power is in the hands of the program directors and station managers who determine what the station will play.

JERSEY BEAT: And those program directors will tell you that they're mandated by the station ownership to get good ratings, and that the only way to do that is playing it safe.

NARUCKI: I don't know. I don't announce what records I've played in my show, I don't identify them, so people call me up all the time and ask what the last cut was. And I find that when I play something new and different, I get a tremendous response. People really want to know what's new and good out there. It's a stupid, circular argument. The radio stations only play the records that are selling. What sells? Nobody can afford to pay seven or eight dollars for a record that might not be any good, so they'll only buy something they know. And where do they hear it? On the radio. It's self-defeating. And it's killing the music business.

JERSEY BEAT: Are you still a student at Upsala?

NARUCKI: I graduated last year. The policy at FMU, like most college stations, is that you can stay with the station as long as you can contribute something that the station can't get from the student body.

JERSEY BEAT: One final question: College radio is a lot better than commercial radio but it's hard to pick up on most tuners.

NARUCKI: You're right. FMU is getting a new transmitter soon, though. But right now, sometimes it's like trying to pick up Radio Free Europe on a crystal set in Hungary. FMU is lucky in that our antenna is pretty well centrally located. We cover about the same 50 mile radius as WNEW-FM. Fifty miles is pretty much the limit with FM, although obvious WNEW has more power than we do, so it comes in more clearly.

WFMU broadcasts at 91.1 FM, with a transmitter centrally located in Essex County. John Narucki is on the air Saturdays from 8 p.m. to midnight. Also worth catching is Pat Duncan, who works the Thursday night spot. Duncan has been presenting live hardcore on the third Thursday of every month, in addition to regularly scheduled specials and interviews.

DOWN AT THE

DIRT

by Pattie Kleinke

DIRT COMPILATION ALBUM, VOL. I
Various Artists/Dirt Records

It's out! The long-awaited Dirt Compilation Album, Volume I. I must say it's a goodie; not too heavy on originality, but rich with enjoyment.

Awards for sounding the most Beatlesque go to the Numbers, the Shakes, the Abstracts, and the Colors. The latter's "Growing Up American" kicks in like early Undertones, which is a good sign. Solid drumming by the Elf propels the song, and why not? His mentor is Blondie's Clem Burke, who also produced this cut. The Elf also drums on the Numbers' cut and produced about half the album.

Other goodies include the Modulators' Sixtiesish theme song, "Down At The Dirt." The Whyos' "1-2-3-4," a tribute to Elvis and Carl Perkins' "Blue Suede Shoes," and the Groceries' "Hire High School Girls" were welcome changes the pace; the Whyos' song is, of course, straight-ahead retro-rockabilly, while the Groceries perform in a talky, Devo-ish style. "Hire High School Girls" was a fave cut of Vin Scelsa's when he was with WNEW.

The song I can't seem to stop playing is the Smithereens' "Got Me A Girl." It's the American answer to the Jam's "I Need You (For Someone)," with great harmonies that just float through the melody. This is one pop cut that could have been two minutes longer. (And when are we gonna be treated to a Smithereens album, Pat?)

The album rounds out with cuts by Transformer, a solid rocker by long-time scenemakers Shrapnel (weren't they around the CBGB scene in '78?), and some Jersey top-ranking (that's reggae for all you white folks out there) from Zap & The Wires.

Thanks to Johnny "Dirt" Schroder, there's now vinyl evidence that Jersey has its share of talented young bands capable of producing commercial product. Now all we need is for a few forward-looking record company execs with a smidgen of taste and imagination, and the Jersey Invasion will be born.

New 45's

"A DATE WITH DISASTER"/"THERE ARE ELECTRICAL FILAMENTS ON MY HAMBURGER"
 Cunts Live/Disturbing Records
 P.O. Box 11463, Chicago, Ill. 60611

This came unsolicited in the mail and with that name, wouldn't have merited more than one quick listen if it weren't so good. The A-side is a hellbent psychedelic romp with great fuzztone guitar and Farfisa organ over visionary Dylanesque vocals with sleazy garage-band production. A guilty pleasure for sure, and the B-side's just as much fun.

"CASUAL CAT AT A LAUNDROMAT"/"GURU EYES"
 Suburban Wives Club/Music For Moderns
 34 N. Maple St. Woodbury, NJ 08096

This femme trio, reformed from the remains of South Jersey's Reesa & The Rooters, tries, with thin songwriting and thinner singing, to recreate the solid gold formula of the Go Go's Vacation. Sorry, girls; to quote Gore Vidal, having no talent is no longer enough. Reesa packs a mean guitar sound, but the witless rockabilly stomp on the A-side just doesn't do it, and the B-side doesn't help.

"INNER CITY ROCKABILLY"/"TELL YOUR MAMA"
 "GONE WILD"/"THE WHEELS START TURNIN'"
 Finn & The Sharks/Rebel Records
 75 E. 7th St. NYC 10003

The A-side and the title cut, "Inner City Rockabilly," is just too slick and facile - pure popabilly for Robert Gordons, maybe. Rockabilly should have a rawer edge to it, as Finn & The Sharks suggest with the b-side's superior "Gone Wild" and "The Wheels Start Turnin'". Whyos' fanatics may eat this up but genre purists and plain ole rockabilly cats will probably find the Sharks' revisionist pop moves too cute to bop.

"DANCE"/"THE BEAT"/"MOODY"
 ESG/99 Records
 99 MacDougal St., NYC

The Scroggins sister, aka ESG from da Bronx, New Yawk, do it again with this 3-song, 12" e.p. Hot, funky dance stuff is what it is, beefed up with a big disco mix from 99 Guru Ed Bahlman, and specially tracked for maximum deejay accessibility. You don't have to be the Saturday night dj at Danceteria to get into this one though. Side A has two new songs, "Dance" and "The Beat," which show just how much these new-wave darlings from Uptown have picked up from the competition, while "Moody" is a re-mix from the band's original e.p. and closer to ESG's strikingly unique admixture of funk, soul, and kitchen harmonies.



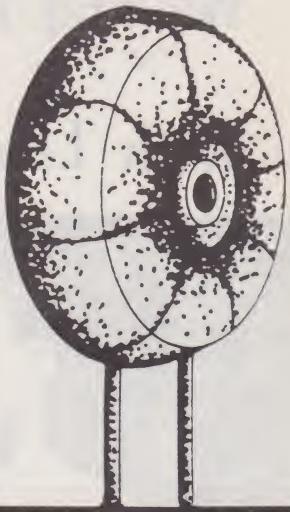
TV TOY



Humans From Earth



Cosmotones



by Jim Testa

INCOGNITO, VOL. I
Various Artists Flexi-Disc Magazine
203 Whitenack Road, Far Hills NJ 07931
\$2.00 + postage

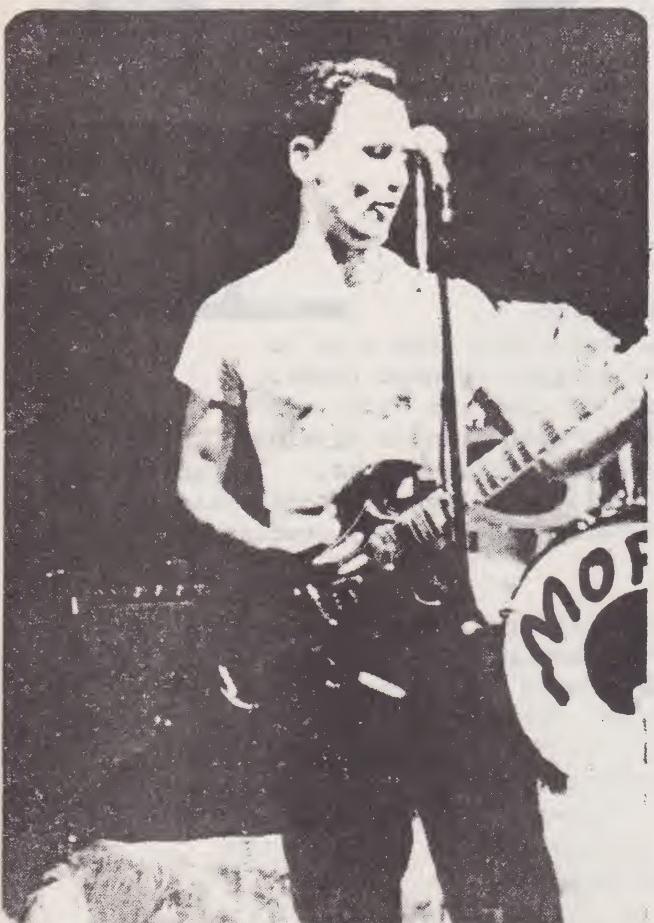
A low-cost flexi-disc, packaged inside an attractive graphic arts magazine, makes a good deal of sense, especially when - as in this case - it is being used to showcase a group of largely unknown bands. Just as the Dirt Compilation LP presents the "sound" of the Dirt Club, so "Incognito" serves up a cross-section of the new-music scene that's developed around Dover's Showplace, one of Jersey's oldest original music venues. Incognito calls itself a "flexzine," and while the magazine portion is largely forgettable, the flexi-disc inside is a useful guide to an important - and largely overlooked - segment of the Jersey scene.

Side One of the disc takes the title "Incognito" literally and offers, besides New Brunswick's pranksterish Punsters fooling around with a trifle called "Rivet Rock", a number of musicians noodling around with synthesizers and such under such obvious noms de rock as Eva Braun, "Frimp And Weeno," and the Computers: Randy Resistor, Mork Mode, et. al. Most of this stuff - again with the exception of the Punsters - is pro forma synth-rock; pretty lifeless, from the arch ennui of Eva Braun to the Computers' Devo-ish "Going Out Of Town" to Calibos (Frimp & Weeno)'s "Kiddie Porn," which sounds like it could be the Punsters again playing around with some hi-tech hardware.

Side Two offers more legitimate music, with the well-established TV Toy, one of Jersey's seminal new-wave bands, leading off with a heavy-metal instrumental, "Flesh Kingodm." The Cosmotones from Hopatcong follow with "Trendy," a sort of anthem for the Showplace (much like the Modulators' "Down At The Dirt" on the Dirt Compilation LP). Unfortunately, "Trendy" sounds a bit too much like the genre it's supposedly parodying, wimpy nu-wave pre-fab pop. Still, the Cosmotones make a handsome trio and I hope to check them out in more detail someday. Slipstream (like TV Toy, they're from Dover) offer "Eight Times," a pleasant mid-tempo rocker with a really nice acoustic guitar mixed in. Humans From Earth, another Showplace band, finishes the disc with "(We) All Take Things Too Seriously," featuring the heavy guitar sound that seems to be the signature of these bands.

As a quick taste of these bands, "Incognito" succeeds perfectly. At \$2, it's as great a financial risk as a 45, while offering the opportunity to check out 8 new acts. The production is crisp and lively throughout, and the flexi-disc (my copy, at least) offers no technical problems; in fact, it seems to be of a higher quality than the flexi's I've gotten from far more expensive magazines. Incognito is definitely a worthwhile investment.

Walking The Line With Linden's



MOPEDS

By Bruce Gallanter

The Mopeds sprung from Linden, NJ, a tough little community that has had more than its share of industrial pollution, racial strife, and currently, a reputed mob boss in town hall. The Mopes, as friends call them, were spared this polluted nightmarish landscape and were raised in the "nice" side of Linden, an area they call "Antarctic Suburbia." It's not a place where artistic sensitivity is held in high esteem.

The Mopeds first got together in 1977, when Owen Plotkin forsook his Folk Hero status at Kean College coffee houses and took the Bob Dylan plunge, reincarnating himself as an electric warrior. Owen's partner was Mitch "The Bitch" Monzeez, and while these two sonic explorers practiced their sound and searched for a rhythm section, it became obvious that fate had decreed the Mopes would be a 2-man band. They played their first gigs in December, 1978, at CBGB and a local benefit.

Owen Plotkin, aka Plank, is one of the few real poets of contemporary song. His deep voice is powerful, disturbing, and undeniably seductive; his rhythm guitar is hypnotic. Owen, 29, is a recent grad of NYU film school and is planning a Moped video.

Monzeez, better known as "The Monz," is one of Linden's first (Only?-Ed.) punks. He was into the Stooges, Velvets, Dolls, Bowie and the Frisco/Detroit school of psychedelic guitar long before anyone else in these parts. Monz has one of the scariest sounds imaginable on guitar, acting as if each solo were his last. He blurs the lines between hardcore, heavy metal, & psychedelia. Both Owen and Monz write songs.

MOPEDS

The Mopeds disappeared from the scene for a while in 1980-81 while Owen was at Grad School and Monz starred in the now-defunct band They Came From Houses. The band is back together now and putting together a series of gigs; Maxwells and CBGB are in the works, they say. The Mopes will also be going into a 4-track studio to cut a demo and/or their first 45 in the near future. A rhythm section is still a possibility, although it seems impossible for any mere mortal to keep up with these two, as their songs seem to change each time they're played - an important part of the Mopeds' unique magic.

Both Mopeds like being a part of the Jersey scene. The Monz is partial to the Bongos while Plotkin is close friends with Candy Apple, with whom he has jammed many times. Owen is also close to the band Jon Waine, and has jammed with other Linden-area bands - Transfusion, Blues Farm members, Dissipated Face, and Suburban Bohemia, among others.

Walking the Line

Walking the line

Walking the line
Between madness and sanity
Art and vanity
Walking the line
Walking the line

There are a lot of proficient lovers
Out there.
Well practiced machines
That rock and roll in bed.
My bed is in the hallway
Filled with anger and dread.
The hallway is filled with people
Each one in a glass cage.
My fists are black and blue and bloody
My thoughts are lost in raaaaaaage
From walking the line
Walking the line
Between madness and sanity
Art and vanity
Walking the line.
Walking the line!
Walking the line!

© 1979



Sand In The Face

From p 4

P: "Murder By The World:" It's about trying to make it in life and how the upperclass assholes try not to let you in their games.

"She's Dead:" It's about this old lady who worked in our cafeteria and everybody loved her, and then she died and everybody made a big fuss about it.

"Teenage Life:" About boredom and aggression.

"Aspirin Kid:" About this kid who took some pills and can't turn back. Like, y'know, it's too late.

JB: Do you plan to have any vinyl out?

P: Yeah, we're going to try to have something out by next summer, 'cos we have this demo tape but we don't like it, so we're gonna make a new tape, combine the two into one good one, and see if anybody wants to make a record out of it.

JB: What do you guys do besides play?

P: We're all unemployed. I'm down to my last 20 bucks. Oh yeah, another thing about recording, we're supposed to be on this compilation from Ohio called Master Tape Volume II. And there's this guy doing a compilation cassette of hardcore from New Jersey and we're gonna try to be on it. It'll be out in the spring.

The interview ends here because my father is yelling at me and I've been talking an hour and it's long distance. - M.L.

Phosphenes

From p 3

drumming and Tim Sherry's whiney, monotone signature vocals and you have a band with chops, personality, style...

Everything but lyrics. And here the Phosphenes live up to their art-rock rep by being totally enigmatic. "Stairway to heaven, Elevator to hell" is hardly the kind of metaphor that gets you into the Oxford Book of Verse, after all; "Cripple" harasses the handicapped; and what of "Asexual:" "You've got sexual constipation/How about oral copulation?"

If it's all an elaborate joke, it's still a good one. After all, how many bands ask the musical question: Do the Phosphenes really want a blow job?

- J. Testa

JERSEY BEAT PINUP 4



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